



IPASC, DRC Newsletter Spring, 2015

Welcome to our newsletter



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Welcome to our Spring 2015 newsletter, which we are sending to all of our supporters through email. We now publish this newsletter every three months.

We also have our website www.ipasc.net where you can easily reach more updated and fresh news about how IPASC is carrying out health activities among one of the poorest communities in the world, in the North – eastern, DRC. We hope to tell you about us, who we are, where we are, our history, life among the communities where you are giving support through our activities.

If you have any suggestions, as to what you might like to hear about, please kindly email us at: ipasrcdc@yahoo.co.uk .



This is our SPRING 2015 newsletter. It will focus on some activities IPASC has carried out since January 2015. As our supporter, we would like to thank you for your prayer. Our Lord is still helping IPASC even as we carry out activities with a very low level of funds. Even if really painful, we managed as we could. We would like once more to thank you for your tireless interest in our activities.

IPASC has sent the 2014 – 2017 project proposals to its financial partners, but, up to now just one of them has accepted. This partner contributed less than 30 % of the entire project budget.

This spring newsletter will retain your attention on usual activities: the Safe Motherhood Service, the Service to Combat HIV & AIDS, Health Promotion and Nurse Training in Community Health activities and moreover one of the extra sensational activities will be mentioned such as Pygmies with gospel at IPASC.

1. Safe Motherhood Service

1.1. Survey among teenagers within Secondary schools

The IPASC Safe Motherhood Service works to improve the mother's and children's health. The main activities carried out by this service were focused on the survey among teenagers concerning reproductive health within schools in Aru Health Zone. This survey was run in 15 schools and targeted 300 students. 274 were reached. The results are, about 67 % have a good knowledge, but about 33 % maintain a low level knowledge about health reproduction. As a consequence, activities for the new phase will be adapted to this issue. Targeted schools included: **AYITI Secondary School, EDAC - Aru Secondary School, Belgika Secondary School, Adia - Lemi Grammar School, Ewapa secondary school, Essebi Secondary school, OTSE Secondary school and AVEC DIEU Secondary school.**



With students at AVEC DIEU Secondary School

1.2. Awareness activities among the local Communities

The awareness activities were led among listeners' clubs members, secondary school students, broadcasts and parents within targeted Health Facilities. In total, 2544 people were directly reached and about 115.562 by radio broadcasts. The topics focused on: preventing early pregnancy, child registration after birth to the registry office and safe motherhood. People from **ERU, ONDOLEA, RODO, YABA, ONGOY, MALINGA** and **ALIBHA** were targeted.

1.3. Visiting Women's groups

The women' groups were visited to verify how they are progressing. Women from 7 Health Facilities were reached. All are progressing well, except the YABA group which is finding progress difficult. The problem has not yet been resolved. A new women's group was created in Aru Health Zone (in AYIKO Health Facility).

The women groups have enormously contributed to improving Reproductive Health among members within villages where the groups exist. Last year the evaluation report showed clearly the positive impact of the women's groups. The report said: *"It is therefore clear that the resultant effect has instilled positive health seeking behavior among women to help reduce maternal and child mortalities"*.

Corroboration of various data collected, pointed out that up to 97% of the women interacted with reported reduced deaths related to pregnancies." Moreover the existence of these groups assures us that the continuity of IPASC activities by the communities themselves is assured. These were the 3 main activities, carried out by the Safe Motherhood Service during the last 3 months.



2. HIV & AIDS Service

2.1. Awareness among targeted people

Awareness activities are one of the most important carried out by IPASC, followed by the others. Awareness helps us to evaluate how we should proceed, or to readjust our interventions to the communities if necessary. Specifically, awareness activities included public speaking, broadcasting and educational talks. In all, 5533 people were reached directly of which 3315 were women and about 115,562 by the radio. The awareness has effectively changed things among this group of People Living with HIV & AIDS. Findings from the last evaluation demonstrated this: *“Initially, the levels of stigma were extremely high but with the HIV sensitizations and awareness forums, many are now able to come together and share experiences and testimonies. This is an indicator of reducing stigma levels in the area. Widows had their property taken by close relatives, but with the project, many are able to access loans and savings with which they use to acquire household goods. Others who were HIV+ were rejected from their families and denied food to eat but through IPASC, CIELS and CARM partnerships, a significant number have been reintegrated back with their families.”*

2.2. Counselling and voluntary testing of HIV

The counseling and voluntary testing for HIV allowed us to reach 664 clients, among them 41 were found positive to HIV and were oriented for medical care. 20 journeys were accomplished to take them for appropriate care to Arua Regional Referral Hospital (Uganda). Others were carried nearby to the Aru Referral Hospital.

2.3. Support to HIV – AIDS clubs, PLWHA (People Living with HIV) and the vulnerable and orphaned children due to AIDS



CARM Meeting at Aru

11 meetings were assisted by IPASC in its role to support the HIV – AIDS clubs. Meetings took place on 3 different sites: ARU (CARM), ARIWARA and INGBOKOLO (CIELS). Over 2800 PLWHA are, up to now, supported by IPASC. 109 children whose parents died from AIDS were identified at schools and supported for fees and other school materials. Food was distributed to 1073 PLWHA living at Aru including patients with Tuberculosis.

2.4. Home visits

86 families were visited by CARM teams together with IPASC. Visits have really improved the health of many PLWHA. Visits have a great impact psychologically and help visitors in discovering the sickness problems with drugs and reporting the situation early to appropriate medical personnel for quick intervention.

2.5. Celebrating International AIDS Day

As organized worldwide, the International AIDS Day was celebrated in Aru with PLWHA. First, meetings were organized together with local organizations which work in fighting HIV & AIDS. Second, the day was celebrated with awareness among the community by inviting them for free screening for HIV in order to know what is the actual serologic state someone has. On this occasion, PLWHA living in prison were visited and food was distributed to them.

At the end of the year the local branch of Vodacom - DRC (one of the telephone societies), chose to visit PLWHA, cared for by IPASC. Food and many other presents (T-shirt, bags and soaps) were distributed to them. All these actions really comforted the PLWHA.



3. Health Promotion Service

3.1. Awareness activities for health promotion at the community level

Awareness activities were carried out among secondary school students, women's groups and by the broadcasting program using the local radio station. In all, 1492 students and 330 women were directly reached by the awareness activities. About 115,540 people reported to be reached by the radio broadcasting. Topics focused on: correct hand washing, using mosquito nets adequately and use of clean water. Targeted villages included AYIKO, ERU, ALIBHA and ARU.

Unfortunately only 50 Modules and 10 posters were produced to support the awareness activities.



A demonstration of the right way to wash hands by the participants during an educational talk by IPASC Health Promotion Service at AYIKO

3.2. Water source building

3 water source building works were finalized and local communities benefited from the clean water. The villages were ARABA, AYIKO and OFOO.

4. Training

On Bunia and Aru campuses, tuition progressed normally. From the middle of December, students went home for holidays. After 2 weeks of rest, they had to begin with the field training; which ended on January 15th. Students from the 4th year had to present the 1st draft of their action planning and case studies at the Health Facilities where they are sent for training. All of them presented their action plans and cases studies in January and February. Apart from that, students had exams and finished them well. There is good progress for the training department.

However, the number of students dwindling due to parents' low income remains serious and one of the unsolved problems until now. Many students after beginning courageous studying are unfortunately constrained to leave school as parents are unable to pay school fees for them and ladies have to be married early as they have to leave school.



Theoretical training part for Statistics applied to health performing by M. Kisembo in the 3rd classroom

SPECIAL VISIT



A Pygmy Pastor reading God's word in Swahili and translated into French by Rev. Madhira

On January 2015, we had special guests. Pygmies came out of the bush not begging for something as has been usual, but this time, to evangelize. Wonderful!

We were greatly blessed for the first time to see a Pygmy reading and making astonishing bible comments. Reading from *2 Corinthians 5: 17* was such a blessing to us: «*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new* » (King James Version). This reading was concluded by a call out to all the listeners. The Pygmies told us: If people cannot accept the gospel from us, Pygmies; known as men living with animals in the bush; maybe, after us God will send monkeys to preach! Is this God's challenge to mankind!

*With many thanks from IPASC DR Congo
God bless you all*

AMUDA BABA, Executive Director.